

REMARKS

Claims 2 and 17, dependent from claims 1 and 11, respectively, have been canceled and incorporated into their independent claims. Claims 15 and 16 are also canceled without prejudiced. Thus, claims 1, 3-14 and 18-27 are pending. Claims 28 and 29 are withdrawn.

The objection to the drawings is respectfully traversed. The Office action does not identify which specific portions of the drawings are not of sufficient quality.

The rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph are believed to be addressed by the amendments to the claims. However, the rejection to the first part (i) of claim 14 is respectfully submitted to be clear and is therefore traversed.

Claims 1-7 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,686,128 to Tracy. Claims 10-20, 22-23 and 25-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tracy in view of U.S. Publ. No. 20020122858 to Baras. Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tracy in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,001,400 to Burger. Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tracy in view of Baras, and in further view of Burger. Claim 21 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tracy in view of Baras and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 4,332,538 to Campbell. Each of these rejections is respectfully traversed.

None of the references relied upon in the Office action disclose the methods recited in claims 1 and 11, including an outer horn passageway that tapers inwardly in cross sectional shape from the outer horn inlet to the outer horn outlet. An example of such a tapered outer horn passageway is illustrated in Figure 3 of the present application.

As mentioned above, this element was in original claims 2 and 17. No specific mention of where such an element appears in the cited references is made in the Office action, as none exists. For instance, Tracy specifically discloses that its protruding tip 15 has a non-tapered end portion, with reference to Figure 3. (Col. 6, ll. 12-22.) Thus, after the tapered portion 18, the extrusion of Tracy would be subject to additional undesirable shearing. As described in the application (page 12, ll. 19-24), shortening the length of the outer horn minimizes the narrowest path that the dough passes through and therefore eliminates or vastly reduces dough shear experienced during coextrusion. This can reduce drag exerted by the inner surfaces of the outer horn (page 13, ll. 29-32). Tracy is disclosing a problem with the prior art, not the solution to additional undesirable shearing solved by the claimed invention.

In view of the foregoing comments, reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required in this application to Deposit Account No. 06-1135.

Respectfully submitted,

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